

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1545

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, ASEC, CY, US
SUBJECT: LIKELY IMMEDIATE CYPRIOT REACTION TO LIFTING OF EMBARGO

REF: NICOSIA 941

SUMMARY. IF EFFORTS TO GET CONGRESS TO LIFT ARMS
EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY SUCCEED, THERE WILL BE A
SHARP TURNDOWN IN ALREADY STRAINED GOC-US RELATIONS.
AN OUTPOURING OF ANTI-AMERICANISM IN NEWS MEDIA AND
SERIES OF DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST U.S. WILL ALMOST
SURELY RESULT. WE EXPECT GOC WILL TAKE STEPS TO
ENSURE THAT DEMONSTRATIONS REMAIN PEACEFUL BUT
CANNOT RULE OUT OUTBURST OF VIOLENCE AGAINST U.S.
INSTALLATIONS IN CYPRUS. FAILURE TO LIFT EMBARGO
WOULD BE BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT TO TURKISH CYPRIOTS
BUT PROBABLY WOULD NOT CAUSE SECURITY THREAT TO
AMERICAN INDIVIDUALS OR PROPERTY. END SUMMARY

1. IMMEDIATE GREEK CYPRIOT REACTION TO LIFTING
EMBARGO, ON PART OF BOTH PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT, WOULD
BE ANGER AND SENSE OF BETRAYAL. GOC ALREADY HAS
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CHARGED THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION BROKE ITS PROMISES
ON CYPRUS, AND ADDITIONAL LOSS OF SUPPORT IN CONGRESS
WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS BITTER BLOW. WE WOULD EXPECT
DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST EMBASSY AND OTHER U.S.
INSTALLATIONS IN CYPRUS AND A SHARP INCREASE OF
ANTI-AMERICANISM IN ALL SECTORS OF PRESS. THE
TENDENCY TO STRIKE OUT AGAINST U.S. WOULD BE GREAT

AND POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE COULD NOT BE RULED OUT.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND, TEMPER OF GREEK CYPRIOTS ARE NOT AS INFLAMED NOW AS THEY WERE IN 1974, 1975 AND 1976 WHEN VERY VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS WERE STAGED AGAINST EMBASSY. AT TIME EMBARGO ISSUE COMES TO VOTE, SCHOOLS WILL BE IN RECESS AND READILY AVAILABLE POOL OF VOLATILE DEMONSTRATORS WILL BE DIMINISHED. FAR-RIGHT FRINGE GROUPS WHICH HAVE PARTICIPATED IN VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST US IN PAST ARE LYING LOW, WITH MANY OF THEIR LEADERS UNDER ARREST OR UNDER OBSERVATION BY SECURITY AUTHORITIES. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE GOC REALIZED THAT U.S.-CYPRUS RELATIONS ENCOMPASS MORE THAN JUST EMBARGO QUESTION, AND THIS REALIZATION WAS REINFORCED BY PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE GOC WILL TAKE EFFECTIVE STEPS TO KEEP DEMONSTRATORS AT SAFE DISTANCE FROM U.S. INSTALLATIONS.

3. ON BALANCE, WE BELIEVE VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST U.S. INSTALLATIONS WILL NOT TAKE PLACE, BUT GIVEN GREEK CYPRIOT TENDENCY TO REACT IRRATIONALLY TO DISAPPOINTMENTS, WE WILL BE ALERT TO POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE AND TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO PROTECT AMERICANS AND AMERICAN PROPERTY AS AND IF NECESSITY ARISES, AND
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WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED AS SITUATION DEVELOPS.

4. FAILURE TO LIFT THE EMBARGO PROBABLY WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THREAT TO SECURITY OF AMERICANS OR U.S. PROPERTY IN TURKISH ADMINISTERED AREA OF CYPRUS. TURKISH CYPRIOTS WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED, BUT THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED TO RECEIVING THE SHORT END OF THE STICK, AND THEY HAVE AN ALMOST SUPERSTITIOUS AWE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CLOUD OF GREEK / GREEK CYPRIOT ON THE EMBARGO AND OTHER ISSUES. THEY PROBABLY WOULD TAKE THE LEAD FROM ECEVIT AS TO POSSIBLE RETALIATORY MEASURES: BORDER CLOSURE, TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS, BUREAUCRATIC HINDERANCE, ETC.
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